



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 108<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 150

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MAY 17, 2004

No. 69

## House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
May 17, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS E. PETRI to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER) for 5 minutes.

### VOTE FOR H.R. 3722, UNDOCUMENTED ALIEN EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AMENDMENTS OF 2004

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, today the American people should pay close attention to the debate when the House takes up H.R. 3722. If one is concerned about the flood of illegal immigrants pouring into our country, this is the debate to watch. And H.R. 3722 is the vote on which to judge your Member of Congress.

There has obviously been a conscious decision made by certain powerful peo-

ple that massive immigration into the United States, legal or illegal, is good for America or at least good for certain friendly interest groups. This vote on H.R. 3722 is clear-cut. The American people can determine who is on their side and who will channel our scarce health care dollars to illegal immigrants, thus encouraging even more illegal immigration into our country.

H.R. 3722, which will come for debate here later today and will be voted on tomorrow, is designed to undo the harm done by an amendment that was slipped into the Medicare bill that was passed just a few months ago. That surprise and somewhat covert amendment established a \$1 billion fund to reimburse American hospitals for the emergency care they provide illegal immigrants.

The perverse, unintended consequences of this are easy to predict. Americans and legal residents who lack health insurance will be sent to the back of the line when seeking help for a medical emergency because the hospitals will naturally give primary service to those illegal immigrants whose tab is being picked up by the Federal taxpayers. This is a travesty.

Anyone voting against H.R. 3722 is voting to put our kids, voting to put our seniors, at the end of a long waiting line moving the illegal immigrant to the front of the line. At this time when we cannot afford the money to pay for prescription drugs for our seniors, we are going to be spending \$1 billion to treat people who have come here illegally.

Those against H.R. 3722 are voting to spend our limited health care money to make America the HMO of the world. And then they act surprised when even more tens of millions of illegals flood into our country.

Watch the vote on H.R. 3722. Listen to the arguments. The other side will claim that the legislation causes hospitals more paperwork. That is a bogus

argument. However, the public will decide when they are listening to the debate whether they are hearing legitimate arguments or whether it is simply noise being generated to confuse people so they will not know who is ripping off their health care dollars and giving it to strangers.

The flood of illegal immigration has already had horrible impacts on our society, on working Americans and middle-class Americans in particular. Wages are being kept down. Our educational and criminal justice systems are deteriorating. And, yes, our health care system is failing.

A government's first responsibility is protecting our citizens and, yes, our legal residents, not to provide benefits and services to anyone in the rest of the world who can get here. Our responsibility is to the people of the United States and the legal residents here of the United States. Our responsibility is not to the rest of the world and to provide any benefits that we can't provide to our American people, to provide them to anyone in the world who can get here. That will break our bank. If we are going to try to do everything for everybody, we are not going to be able to do anything for anybody, even our own people.

H.R. 3722 is the litmus test. There is always a good sounding excuse for voting against any bill that tries to come up and tries to come to grips with the out-of-control flood of illegals coming into our country. But the issue is clear in H.R. 3722: Are America's limited health care dollars going to treat illegal immigrants rather than being used to treat our own people?

Members of Congress need to hear from their constituents. H.R. 3722 is a first good step in stemming the tide of illegal immigrants into our country. It will be debated here in just a few hours. America should pay attention.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H3019